

THE ORNAMENTS  
OF  
THE STATUTE BOOK GIVEN  
TO THE COLLEGE

BY  
DOCTOR CAIUS

IN  
DECEMBER, 1557

*Moore C. S. R. 1700*



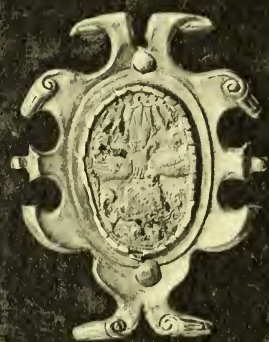
*Another copy at back of vol.*

JANUARY 26, 1911

The Plates show the covers of the Statute Book,  
the larger being of the full size.













Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2016

<https://archive.org/details/b24991211>

Ornari res ipsa negat, contenta doceri.

Dr. Caius rejected this opinion of Manilius, and showed on many occasions that he thought grace and ornament proper accompaniments of sound learning and of professional affairs. In 1557, when he was President, the following passage occurs in the 'Annals' in his writing :

"Mense Decembri ornatus est argento liber Statutorum Collegii. Richardus Bartlot, Doctor et Elector, bonus et venerandus senex, doctrina et longo medicinæ usu insignis, duodecimo calend. Februarii hora tertia bene mane obiit diem, anno ætatis suæ octogesimo septimo, sepultus decimo calend. eiusdem mensis, in cuius pompa funebri gestatus primo est ante Præsidentem liber statutorum, argento ut dictum ante est, ornatus. Inhumatus est autem apud sanctum Bartholomeum maiorem."

The book, adorned with silver in 1557, contained in 1563, the edition of the Statutes completed during the second period of presidency of Caius.

The contents of this book are no longer extant, but the artistic features of the silver corners, clasps, and central shields of the handsomest statute book the College now possesses are characteristic of the time of Caius. The sides, covered with crimson velvet, may also be ancient, so that the whole binding is probably the original exterior provided by Caius. The arms of the College are on one silver shield, and on the other shield is a field semée of flowers gentle; the field of the arms of Caius without the bearings which are upon it as it appears when impaled with the shield of Gonville on the achievement of their College at Cambridge. One clasp and its base have been lost. Fine classical heads form the centres of the corner-pieces and of the attachments of the clasps. They are surrounded by scroll-formed frames. The back has been repaired, but otherwise this is the cover which contained the Statutes borne before our President when he attended the funeral ceremony of Dr. Richard Bartlot in the Church of St. Bartholomew the Great on January 23rd, 1557.

The Requiem was probably sung by the Dominicans, to whom Queen Mary had granted the church built by Rahere, from which, in her father's time, the ancient occupants—the Augustinian Canons—had been displaced.

Every Cambridge man has seen the Statutes of the University solemnly carried in the procession when the Vice-Chancellor and Proctors enter the Senate House, and Caius, who had witnessed it in his day, introduced the same observance into this College. The year before these silver ornaments of the Statute Book were made Caius presented to the College the Caduceus, with which we are all familiar, at a feast, the first public dinner of the College, held in his house within the Smithfield Gate of St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

Thus of our President, Dr. Caius, the College possess three gifts and personal memorials: the 'Annals,' written in his own hand, the cover of the Statute Book which was carried before him, and the Caduceus which he bore when he entered the Comitia, placed upon a cushion during the meeting, and took up again when the business was ended.



The Statutes at present contained in the ancient ornamented cover which Caius gave belong to the seventeenth century and the college seal was attached to them in 1692, as is stated in a note written in that year which follows the last words of the Statutes. There are several other manuscripts of the Statutes; one, on paper, was written in 1647, another in 1687. The first copy in English is in a volume bound in dark silk, with corners and centre plates and clasps (now broken) of engraved silver. It is written on vellum with gilt edges and begins with the title: "Acts, Ordinances and By Lawes made by the President and Colledge or Commonalty of the Faculty of Physick in London the three and twentieth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred, ninety and six at the Colledge situate in Warwick Lane in the parish of Christ Church in London in pursuance of severall Leters Patent and Acts of Parliament made and granted to or concerning the said President and Colledge or Commonalty for the better Rule and Government of the said Colledge and practice of Physick."

The method of admission of a fellow prescribed in this book was almost identical with the form of admission to a degree which is still observed in the Senate House at Cambridge. The statute says: "Hee who is to be admitted shall on his knees put his hands together between the hands of the President. Who shall then say to this or the like effect: 'Ego S. C. Preses huius Collegii admitto te C. D. in Societatem nostri Collegii (vel in ordinem Candidatorum vel in numerum permissorum),' " after which "if he be a fellow he shall, by taking the fellows by the hand, give thanks to every fellow present."

There are two copies of a later edition of the statutes bound in solid dark blue morocco, with handsome gold tooling, one of which was that of the Senior Censor of 1752, and the other that of the Registrar of the same year.

Sir William Browne, whose portrait as president by Hudson hangs at the far end of our dining room, was the Senior Censor of 1752, and the Registrar was Dr. Thomas Lawrence, the friend of Johnson.

A copy of the Statutes in a binding of a later year of the same century belongs to the reign of George III, and is corrected up to 1795.

An unauthorised edition of the Statutes was published in London in 1693, but they were first issued in print by the College in 1765, and in Latin.

On the evening of the Harveian Oration of 1910, when the Master and Fellows of Caius dined here to join us in commemorating our common benefactor, all our copies of the works of Dr. Caius were displayed, and as this is the first meeting of the Fellows' Club since the quadri-centenary of his birth, it seems appropriate to give its members this account of the handsome cover in which Dr. Caius bound our Statutes, desiring thus to show his veneration for the College and its laws.

NORMAN MOORE.